



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



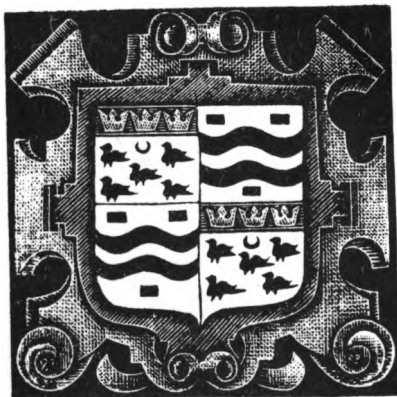
*Chirps for the chicks. By
M.E. Winchester*

Margaret E. Whatham



600087094Y

Bodleian



Library



CHIRPS FOR THE CHICKS.

CHIRPS FOR THE CHICKS

BY

M. E. WINCHESTER

AUTHOR OF 'A NEST OF SPARROWS'

WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

WALLIS MACKAY



SEELEY, JACKSON, & HALLIDAY, 54, FLEET STREET
LONDON. MDCCCLXXXII

[All Rights Reserved.]

280. 0. 751.

Digitized by Google

TO MY GODCHILD,
EVELYN A. S. GEM,
AND TO MY NEPHEWS,
CHARLES STEWART WHATHAM,
AND
ROWLAND ROYLE WHATHAM,
THESE CHIRPS ARE AFFECTIONATELY
Dedicated.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
WHAT THE BLACKBIRD DID WITH THE NOSE	7
'NAUGHTY DADDY LONGLEGS'	11
MY APRON-STRINGS ARE NOT QUITE DRY	16
JACK AND GILL	18
LITTLE BOY BLUE	20
BA, BA, BLACK SHEEP !	22
THE GREEDY MOUSE	24
'OH, WHEN I'M A MAN'	26
JENNY'S NEST	28
THE WOMAN OF KENT IN THE CROW'S NEST	30
POOR ROBIN	36
THE THREE BAD LITTLE RABBITS	39
THE FROLICSOME KITTEN	44
THE DISHONEST FOX	47
THE SICK CANARY	49
THE NAUGHTY BANTAM-COCK	51
DAISIES	54
DISOBEDIENT CHARLEY	58
THE VIOLET	63

	PAGE
PASSIONATE WILLY	66
MAKING A NOSEGAY	73
ROBIN REDBREAST	77
RAINDROPS	86
DOUBTING FRED	87
JOHN'S VISIT TO THE COUNTRY	95
JOHN AND THE BIG BULL	100
JOHN AND THE BLACKBERRIES	106
MR. AND MRS. JENNY WREN AND THEIR PRETTY	
NEST	114
THE END OF JENNY'S PRETTY NEST	117
MRS. GRAMMAR'S FAMILY	124
FISHER-BOY JIM	129
CHARLEY'S GREEN CATERPILLAR ; OR, THE BUTTER-	
FLY'S HISTORY	134

CHIRPS FOR THE CHICKS.



WHAT THE BLACKBIRD DID WITH THE NOSE.

SING a song of sixpence,

A pocket full of rye,

Four-and-twenty blackbirds

Baked in a pie.

When the pie was opened,

The birds began to sing ;

Now, wasn't that a dainty dish

To set before a king ?

The king was in the counting-house,

Counting out his money,

The queen was in the parlour,

Eating bread and honey ;

The maid was in the garden,
Hanging out the clothes,
There came a little blackbird
And pecked off her nose.

The maiden shrieked, and quickly rushed
All sobbing to the king,
And said: 'Oh, please, your majesty,
Here's a pretty thing :
While I was in the garden,
Hanging out the clothes,
A naughty little blackbird came
And took away my nose.'

The king replied : ' Go quickly, search,
And let the knave be caught ;
'Tis plain he can't behave himself,
And must be better taught.
And when you've caught and bound him
Then bring him here to me,
And I will sit and think of what
His punishment shall be.'

They quickly caught the wicked bird,
And brought him to the king;
His little feet were pinioned with
A tiny silver ring.
The king said, 'Mister Blackbird,
For taking off this nose,
You have a very good excuse
To offer, I suppose?'

The Blackbird said: 'I'm one of those
The maid put in the pie;
If maids make pies of blackbirds,
Now, please to tell me why
The blackbirds can't make pies of maids?'
'Oh, shocking!' cried the king,
'You naughty little Blackbird, that
Is quite another thing!'

And here the maiden sadly wept:
'What *will* become of me!
A husband I shall never get,
An old maid I must be

I don't believe I'll meet the man,
No, not in all my life,
Who'll take a girl without a nose
To be his wedded wife.'

The king replied : ' Come, dry your eyes ;
Don't cry, my pretty dear,
For I must find a beau for you ;
That's really very clear !
Here, Mister Blackbird, you're to blame,
So take the maiden's hand,
For you must be her husband now,
I beg you'll understand.'

The Blackbird cried : ' Your majesty,
I dare not take her hand.
What would the people say to her
At home, in Blackbird's Land ?
I'll go and get her precious nose—
My cook's not made the pie—
And I will stick it on again,
At least, my lord, I'll try.'

Away he flew to get the nose,
And brought it in his beak ;
And soon he stitched it on again,
So very nice and neat.
A dose of cooling medicine,
And piece of sticking-plaster,
Soon took away all marks of this
Poor maiden's sad disaster.

'NAUGHTY DADDY LONGLEGS.'

'GOOSEY, Goosey Gander,
Where shall I wander ?
Upstairs and downstairs,
And in my lady's chamber ?'
There I met an old man
Neglecting his affairs ;
I took him by the left leg
And threw him downstairs.

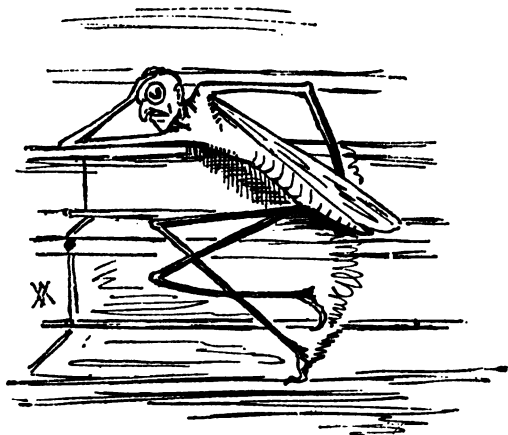
Quickly from her chamber came
My lady crying out :
'Goosey, what a dreadful noise !
Pray, what's it all about ?'

‘It’s naughty Daddy Longlegs,’
Goosey Gander cried,
‘I found him on the staircase,
And threw him outside.’

‘My dear Goosey Gander,
You served the fellow right ;
If I had met him on the stairs
I *should* have had a fright.’
‘Oh,’ groaned Daddy Longlegs,
‘I’m very very sore.’
‘Be off, Sir !’ cried my lady ;
‘Goosey, shut the door.’

Naughty Daddy Longlegs,
Weeping very sadly,
Hobbled slowly home, and cried :
‘Oh, dear ! I’m hurt so badly !
That cruel Goosey Gander
Has hurt my leg and head ;
Dear wife, run for the doctor,
While I get into bed.’

Doctor Sharp came quickly,
Looking very wise ;
When he saw the head and leg
He quite turned up his eyes.



'Knocked, and cracked, and broken,
Too shocking to be seen ;
Naughty Daddy Longlegs,
Wherever have you been ?'

Said old Daddy Longlegs :
'What is that to you ?
Please to mend my head and leg ;
That's all you've got to do.'

The doctor from his pocket
Took a hammer and a nail,
And silly Daddy Longlegs
Grew very, very pale.

Four-and-twenty nails it took,
That head and leg to fix,
And then the doctor said he'd go
Some medicine to mix.
'Oh, dear!' groaned Daddy Longlegs ;
'I'll die, I know I will.'
'I hope you won't,' the doctor said,
'Before you've paid my bill.

'Be careful, Mistress Longlegs,
To keep him safe in bed ;
Give him nothing nice to eat :
Just water and dry bread.
Potato stalks and cabbage leaves,
Bran and brewer's barm ;
And mustard plasters on his head
Will not do any harm.'

Twenty long and weary weeks
They fed him on this stuff,
Before the doctor would consent
That he had had enough ;
And then 'twas just because they found
So very thin he'd grown,
They feared that nothing would be left
But whiskers, skin, and bone.

Repentant Daddy Longlegs
Called his little wife,
And said : ' I've quite made up my mind
I'll never, all my life,
Waste my time and idly roam,
Neglecting my affairs ;
Nor loiter in my lady's room,
Or on my lady's stairs.'

MY APRON-STRINGS ARE NOT
QUITE DRY.

THERE was an old woman was tossed in a blanket,
Ninety-nine times as high as the moon,
Where she was going I could not imagine,
But in her hand she carried a broom ;
'Old woman ! old woman ! old woman !' said I,
'Where are you going to up so high ?'



33

'Where am I going to up so high ?
To sweep the cobwebs off the sky,
'And I'll be with you by-and-by,
As soon as my apron-strings are dry.'

Then the old woman jumped into the blanket,
 Into the blanket old woman and broom ;
Twenty old men stood waiting to toss her,
 Ninety-nine times as high as the moon.
'Old woman ! old woman ! old woman !' said I,
'I'm sure you will fall if you go so high !'
'Oh no !' said she, 'I've work up here,
To rub the stars and make them clear,
For I've my apron-strings to dry,
Among the lights in yonder sky.'
And then from her pocket she pulled a blue duster,
 Ninety-nine times as big as the moon ;
What a commotion, and oh ! what a fluster !
 Made the old woman with duster and broom.
The stars shone out so clear and bright,
They frightened the woman with their strong
 light ;
'Oh dear !' she cried, 'they'll spoil my sight,'
And down she came in a terrible fright.
And sat upon a stone to cry,
'My apron-strings are not quite dry.'

JACK AND GILL.

JACK and Gill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water,
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Gill came tumbling after.

‘Oh dear!’ cried Gill, ‘now here’s a spill;
Oh, Jack, why did you do it?
Mother will scold when she is told
And we are sure to rue it.

‘Said she to me, Be quick with tea,
My careless little daughter;
Don’t stay to play upon the way,
But haste to the well for water.

‘Now mother she won’t get her tea;
’Tis you who are to blame, sir!
Why did you tumble? you made me stumble,
It really is a shame, sir.’

Then Jack did cry aloud, ‘Oh my!
My head is very sore;
The water’s gone, who cares? come on!
We’ll go to the well for more.

'And don't you tell that down we fell,
Or say I hurt my head,
Or mother will say we stayed to play,
And send us both to bed.'



Then up the hill they toiled with will,
The hill was very steep ;
More water drew, with trouble too,
The well was very deep.
Then home they went, full-well content,
They went most carefully ;
And both were glad to find they had
Good time to make the tea.

LITTLE BOY BLUE.

LITTLE Boy Blue, come blow your horn,
The sheep and cows are in the corn ;
Oh, where's the boy who minds the sheep ?
Under the hay-stack fast asleep.

Little Boy Blue, you should not sleep,
When you are set to mind the sheep ;
The cows are eating all the corn,
Come, get up quick and blow your horn.

In vain the farmer's wife did shake,
Little Boy Blue would not awake ;
' O, dear !' she cried in tones forlorn,
' The cows will eat up all my corn.

' I'll try myself the horn to blow.
And see if I can't make them go ;'
Cried all the cows : ' Bah ! blow it, do,
But don't think we will go for *you*.

' We've been rejoicing, cows and sheep,
That little Blue is fast asleep,
We like to wander at our ease,
With no one but ourselves to please.

‘ This corn is really quite a treat,
So young and juicy, fresh and sweet ;’
‘ But,’ cried the wife, ‘ you eat my bread !’
‘ Do we indeed ?’ they smiling said.



‘ You’ve had your bread for years, at least ;
To-day it is our turn to feast.
We find your corn delicious stuff ;
We’ll tell you when we’ve had enough ’

The farmer’s wife with rage was mad ;
• She cried : ‘ That lazy little lad,

I'll quickly make his slumbers break ;
I'll whip him till he does awake.'

Little Boy Blue unclosed his eyes,
And looked about him in surprise ;
And when he saw her heavy stick,
And angry face, he jumped up quick.

Away he ran into the corn,
And very loud he blew his horn ;
'Oh,' cried the cows, 'here's little Blue !'
And, tails in air, away they flew.

BA, BA, BLACK SHEEP !

'BA, ba, black sheep !
Have you any wool ?'
'Yes, sir, I have—
Three bags full.
'One for my master,
One for his dame,
But none for the little boy
Who cries in the lane.'

‘ Ba, ba, blacksheep !

Pray tell me what they do
With all the bags of pretty wool
They yearly get from you ?

‘ They comb it and they card it,
They wash it in the rill,
And dye it pretty colours
Ere they weave it at the mill.

‘ Of wool is made the carpet,
So cosy, warm, and bright,
The curtains and the blankets thick
That cover you at night.

‘ Your trousers and your stockings,
Your jacket, gloves and scarf,
And many other pretty things,
I have not told you half.

‘ And we, my little master,
But ask you, for all these,
The cooling brooks and pastures green
Where we can dine at ease ;

'Sweet turnips for our breakfast,
When all is under snow ;
And shelter from the beating rain,
When winter winds do blow.

'Don't frighten us with stick or dog,
Nor drive us in the heat,
Along the rough and stony roads
That bruise our tender feet.

'But let us rest beneath the trees,
In grassy meadows live,
And lots of wool to make your clothes,
We willingly will give.'

THE GREEDY MOUSE.

A MOUSE peeped out of her hole one day,
And said : ' I wonder if Pussy's away,
For I should like to go and play
Upon the kitchen floor.
I want to search for stuff to eat,
Some crumbs of bread, or bits of meat,
Or nice plum-cake so rich and sweet,
Like what I got before.'

She opened her door and soon ran out,
And under the tables frisked about,
And whisked her tail with merry shout :
She smelt some dainty fare.

The cupboard-door stood open wide,
Says she : ' I mean to creep inside,
For I know well the cake they hide
Upon the shelf up there.'



And when of cake she'd had a deal,
' Oh dear,' she cried, ' I really feel
Quite thirsty after such a meal,
I'll see what's here around.

This is a jug of milk, I think;
I'll just stoop down and take a drink.'
She slipped her foot, and in did sink,
The greedy mouse was drowned.

'OH, WHEN I'M A MAN.'

'OH, when I'm a man,
Just as big as papa,
I'll have a moustache,
And I'll smoke a cigar.

'I'll wear a tail-coat,
Oh, won't I be grand,
With a glass in my eye,
And a cane in my hand!

'I'll buy all the papers,
And read all the news:
The *Times* and the *Standard*,
And weekly reviews.

'And I'll have a birthday—
Just listen and hear—
About every week,
And not once a year.

‘And it would be better
If Christmas Day came
A little bit oftener,
And New Year the same.

‘I’ll be *very* rich,
For you’ll certainly find
I’ll run to the toyshop
Whenever inclined.

‘I won’t have a nursemaid
To bother me so,
Nor teacher for lessons ;
Oh dear, no, no, no !

‘Nor will I to bed,
Like a baby so small,
At seven o’clock ;
No, I won’t go at all !

‘Nasty rice-pudding,
Potatoes and meat,
Thick bread and butter
I never will eat;

'But dine on sweet candies
Wherever I be,
With sponge-cakes for breakfast,
And toffee for tea.'

JENNY'S NEST.

THE spring is advancing, the trees wear their best,
And Jenny has made such a snug, cosy nest,



In green, shady nook,
By clear, rippling brook,

Where no one can tease,
And everything please.

The blossoms are blooming so sweet on each side,
And Jenny is sitting with wings opened wide,
 In patient delight,
 All day and all night,
 On eggs, one, two, three,
 So pretty and wee.

The flowers with fragrance are filling the air ;
We'll look in the nest, for Jenny's not there,
 But six sparkling eyes
 Peep out in surprise,
 And Jenny, with food,
 Flies back to her brood.

The summer is smiling, the woods blooming fair,
And Jenny, with three little nestlings is there ;
 In sunbeams so bright,
 With pride and delight,
 They're learning to fly
 Up into the sky.

THE WOMAN OF KENT IN THE CROW'S NEST.

THERE was an old woman, a woman of Kent,
A funny old woman was she ;
Who, tired of paying her taxes and rent,
Declared she would live in a tree.

‘The birds of the air,’ said this woman, ‘are wise,
No town-rates, or landlords, they pay,
Nor live they in dread lest the income-tax rise ;
I’ll live like a bird from this day.’

She went to the forest and wandered about,
Till, climbing a giant oak-tree,
She found a crow’s nest, and the crows being out,
Cried : ‘Here’s a house ready for me.

‘’Twill rock in the wind, and these pretty leaves
green,
Will keep out the hail and the rain ;
I’ll live here for ever, as free as the queen,
And never pay taxes again.

'I'll merrily dance in the moonbeams' pale light,
And chat with the man in the moon ;
I'll sing all the day, and I'll laugh all the night,
And grow young and beautiful soon.



'I'll never pay taxes, I'm queen of my oak,
And queens never pay any rent ;
I'll sit on the side of my dwelling and smoke,
Hurrah for a life of content !

She lighted her pipe, and was smoking, when
lo !

A black crow perched close by her side :
' Good-day to you, sir,' she exclaimed, bowing
low
' Caw ! caw !' Mister Black Crow replied.

' Dear madam,' he added, in tones most polite,
' You've made a mistake, I've no doubt ;
But this is my nest, and I want to come in :
Oblige me, and kindly get out.

' My wife's in the wood, with our young children
three ;
She's teaching the darlings to fly.
She's hurried me home to get ready their
tea ;
They're all coming back by-and-by.'

To which the old woman, all smiling, replied :
' Though sorry to put you about,
I've made up my mind in this nest to abide,
And strongly object to get out.'

'But, madam, my family, think of them, do!'

'What! think of young crows! how absurd!'

'But, madam, reflect, this is foolish of you.'

'I never reflect, vulgar bird.'

The crow lost his temper completely, and
said :

'Get out of my nest! if you don't,
I'll pull every hair from the top of your head.'

'Oh no,' said the woman, 'you won't.'

'My head is as bald as the palm of my hand,
And if you dare touch it, why I
Will treat you as we treat the crows in my
land—

I'll bake you to death in a pie.

'You naughty, impertinent, bold little bird,
Go build you another round nest!

The world's come to something, indeed, 'pon my
word,

When crows nice old women molest.'

Now just at this moment the wife crow came home,
And with her the young children three;
Who, hearing the story, did sigh and bemoan,
‘Oh, what shall we do for our tea!’

They begged the old woman, implored her with
tears,
To let them come into their nest,
For they were so weary ; she said : ‘ Now, my
dears,
Be off, and don’t chatter and pest.’

They all flew away, and this woman of Kent
Said : ‘ What a wise woman am I !
To get rid of taxes, of town-rates and rent,
All women my method should try.’

She sat to consider what ought to be done,
Her stolen, snug dwelling to keep,
Till pretty, bright stars twinkled out one by one,
And the moon sent her fast asleep.

But who can imagine her fright in the night,
On hearing a loud, angry roar,
And seeing around, by the moon’s silver light,
Three hundred black crows—perhaps more !

They all rushed upon her, like some swelling tide
And pecked her long nose and bald head,
'You monsters uncivil, how dare you!' she cried.
'Caw! caw! caw!' was all the crows said.



They gobbled her up, that old woman of Kent,
Or rather, they tried to, folks say ;
I've heard of her since paying taxes and rent,
So I hope she got safely away.

POOR ROBIN.

OH, hard is the ground,
The snow lies around,
Poor Robin no breakfast can find.
He's searched for three hours,
The desolate bowers,
Half dead with the pitiless wind.

For, oh, be it known,
Quite friendless and lone,
Are the birds when stern winter doth reign,
In want of a home,
The forest they roam,
And look for a berry in vain.

So, cold and bereft,
The forest he left,
And flew to a low window-sill ;
The breakfast was spread,
He saw lots of bread,
And tapped on the pane with his bill.

‘Oh, Robin has come !
Let’s throw him a crumb!’
Cried two little kind-hearted girls ;
But Robin, so shy,
To a holly did fly ;
He feared the blue eyes and fair curls.

They threw down a treat
Of crumbs white and sweet,
To poor little Robin forlorn,
And all winter through
They scattered them too,
Each day on the white frozen lawn.

Then Robin so sad
Was joyous and glad,
And flew to the woods before dawn ;
The birds he met there,
He told of the fare,
That lay on the clergyman’s lawn.

And we have since heard
That every bird

A good breakfast ate before long :
They thanked the kind girls,
With blue eyes and curls,
As loud as they could in sweet song.



I hope that all you
Will think of them too,
And be kind to the birdies so small ;
And give them a treat
Of crumbs white and sweet,
Whenever you see the snow fall.

THE THREE BAD LITTLE RABBITS.

A LITTLE brown rabbit once burrowed a hole
At the foot of a mossy hill ;

It took a long time, with her two little paws
She worked with a hearty good will.

She made a long passage, and formed at the end
The snuggest retreat ever known ;

And when all was finished, sang out in delight :
' Oh, now I've a house of my own !'

She lined it with heather, and fur that she pulled
From off her own soft tender breast ;

And here with her young ones she happily lived,
And thought it a sweet cosy nest.

In all they were four, the proud mother and three
Bright frolicsome little ones gay,

She christened them after the hue of their fur :
Miss Brownie, and Blackie, and Grey.

Now while they were little, she often declared
Of children she'd really the best,

Obedient, good-tempered, unselfish, and kind,
Oh, theirs was a peaceable nest !

Alas, they grew older and stronger, and then
They gave her a great deal of pain ;
They all disobeyed her, were rude, and so cross,
And quarrelled again and again.

The Grey one told stories ; she could not believe,
Nor trust to a word that she said.
The Brown was conceited, 'twas funny to see
Her strutting and tossing her head.
But Black was the naughtiest one of them all,
Dishonest and greedy was he.
Ah, many a tear did the poor mother shed,
Over her bad children three.

She lectured and warned them right often against
The sin of acquiring bad habits
Implored them to try and be good—they were all
Right thoroughly bad little rabbits ;
And when they were ready their fortunes to seek,
' Remember ! ' she cried, ' what I say,
If you venture to break the laws of the land,
The penalty dearly you'll pay.'

Miss Grey trotted off, and I really don't think

She waited to murmur 'Good-bye.'

In crossing the wood an acquaintance she spied,

And merrily to her did hie.

She found her in grave contemplation upon

A curious house on the ground ;

And cried, as she spied a rich heap of fine wheat :

' Oh, what a grand treasure you've found !'



' Some dwelling it is, and the owner's away ;

He's left all unguarded his store.

Come, let us go in and partake of his cheer ;

How kind to leave open the door !'

‘Stay, stay!’ cried the other; ‘I do not believe
This curious thing is a house;
It looks like a snare laid by poachers—beware!
Unless you’d be trapped like a mouse.’

‘Oh, don’t be afraid,’ said Miss Grey; ‘it’s a house;’
And then, to convince her still more,
She told her a story, and said she had been
Inside that same house once before.
Her friend, never thinking she’d say what was
false,
Went in, but imagine their fright!
For it *was* a trap—they were fast—and alas!
The poachers ate rabbits that night.

Miss Brown in the meanwhile went strutting along,
Conceitedly pointing her toes;
And sauntering at last to a clear rippling stream,
She paused to admire her pose.
‘How lovely and graceful I am!’ she exclaimed;
‘Such beauty is not often found.’
Admiring her beauty she fell in the stream!
The vain little rabbit was drowned.

Young Black in his turn going whistling along,
Felt hungry when dinner-time came ;
Says he : ' I should like some new victuals to-day,
For months I have dined on the same.
My mother has told me contented to be
With herbage, nor pillage among
The gardens of farmers ; but what does *she* know ?
It's altered since mother was young.'

He crept through a hedge, and he soon was engaged
In nibbling beans, cabbage, and pease,
Sweet lettuce and cauliflower ; smacking his lips,
He cried : ' I'll dine always on these.
How foolish of mother to rear us on grass,
Neglecting this rich, charming spot.'
Alas, Farmer Hodgings has pointed his gun—
Click, crack ! greedy Blackie was shot.

Now, dear little children, take warning by this :
While yet in the nursery, mind
You strive to correct all those faults that are
checked
By teacher, or parent so kind.

For when you are older and launched in the world,
You'll find that unconquered bad habits
A terrible punishment always bring on,
Be warned by the fate of these rabbits.

THE FROLICSOME KITTEN.

'OH, Pussy, Pussy,! cease, I pray,
Your frisky, scampish way, miss;
I'm very busy, I've no time
To romp about and play, miss.
Now just look here, what shall I do?
Your claws have torn my book,
The very page I had to learn,
You naughty kitten, look!

'Get away—quick, I say!
Don't you mean to mind, miss?
If you don't, see if I won't
Some means to make you find, miss!
Oh, Pussy, you're a shocking rogue!
Do be a little quiet!
I cannot learn my lessons
While you're making such a riot.

‘ Look at your mother, how she sits
Sedately by the tree, miss :
A well-behaved and steady cat,
As one can plainly see, miss.
I wish that I were just as free
To loiter in the sun ;
I’d go with you, my little Puss,
And have some famous fun.



‘ But I shan’t, for I can’t ;
I’ve my task to do, miss,
Ere I play, so blithe and gay,
Upon the lawn with you, miss.

Oh, pussy dear, please go away,
And leave me still and quiet ;
I cannot learn my lessons
While you're making such a riot.

' Why don't you go and catch some mice ?
We've plenty on the farm, miss ;
They eat the peas, and all they please,
They do no end of harm, miss.
I'm sure you're old enough, and ought
To catch some every day ;
Do you suppose you're always going
To frisk about and play ?

' Get along !—you are strong—
Go and catch a mouse, miss ;
In the corn, or on the lawn,
Or somewhere in the house, miss.
Oh, Pussy dear, please run away,
And leave me still and quiet ;
I'll never learn my lessons
While you're making such a riot.'

THE DISHONEST FOX.

By the silver moonlight,
Mister Fox once said,
'I'll go to the White Farm,
Hodge is safe in bed ;
I'll creep into the fowl-house,
Where I'll sup at ease
On chicken, goose, or turkey,
All three, if I please.'

By the silver moonlight,
Hodge had set a trap,
Knowing well what mischief
Foxes would be at ;
Hidden by the long grass,
Foxy never thought,
Danger lurked so near him
Until he was caught.

By the silver moonlight,
All in vain he tried
To escape his fetters,
So he groaned and cried :

‘ They’ll shoot me dead to-morrow,
Wretched Fox am I !’
Yes, you are indeed, sir,
You’ve good cause to cry.



By the silver moonlight
You should never steal,
Never want the farmer’s
Poultry for a meal ;
Traps are set for bad thieves,
You do well to cry,
You’re a very bad thief,
Therefore you must die.

THE SICK CANARY.

WHAT is the matter, Dick, to-day ?

You do not chirp or sing,
But sit all lonely on your perch,
Your head beneath your wing.

Say, Dicky, are you very sad ?

Or are you tired or sick ?

I plainly see that something's wrong

With you, poor little Dick.

You have not sung for me to-day ;

Sing, Dicky—won't you sing ?

I love to hear you at my play,

Come, Dicky, sing—*do* sing !

When round my nursery merrily,

I used to shout and run,

You always drowned my voice with yours,

The noise was famous fun.

Till nurse declared she would be deaf,

With such a dreadful riot,

And threw her apron o'er your cage,

To keep you still and quiet.

You have not sung, etc.

I'm sure you've everything you want
Your cage is bright with gold ;
You've lots of seed and sugar too,
And water fresh and cold.



And here's a sprig of chickweed, see,
Dick, won't you look at it ?
I gathered it myself for you,
Come, eat a little bit.
You have not sung, etc.

Alas, I see you're very sick ;
What will be good for you ?
I'm not a doctor, Dicky, so
I don't know what to do.

But I will go and ask papa,
Some medicine to get,
To cure, and make you gay again,
My pretty feathered pet.
You have not sung, etc.

THE NAUGHTY BANTAM-COCK.

SAID a little Bantam-Cock,
As he strutted to and fro,
In an old farm-yard one day :
‘ I am sure it is a shame,
And I think I am to blame,
The farmer’s wife to obey ;
Is there any reason why
I should be obliged to fly
When she thinks fit to call ?
And be always locked up tight,
In the big fowl-house all night
With hens and chickens small ?

Now, I've quite made up my mind,
And to-night I'll stay behind,
When the others homeward run ;
I will hide behind the hay,
Until everyone's away,
Oh, won't it just be fun !
I will wander at my ease,
In the fields eat what I please,
Nice potatoes, oats, or corn,
And I'll frolic, and I'll roam,
Till I choose to saunter home,
Just before the break of dawn.

So this foolish Bantam-bird,
Very naughty and absurd,
Hid behind a stack of hay,
And when left alone was he,
Why, he fairly chinked with glee ;
As he proudly stalked away,
And as soon as day was done,
Cried he gaily, ' Oh, what fun !

To behold the moonbeams bright ;
His excitement being strong,
Soon he crowed aloud and long,
To express his great delight.



But a hungry fox, alas !
At that instant chanced to pass,
And he chuckled : ‘ Here’s good luck !’
And wonderfully pleased,
Ferociously he seized
The crowing little chuck.

All in vain poor Banty cried,
Quick, across the meadow wide
Away the fox did run.
And finely he did sup,
Poor Banty he ate up,
And that was all the fun.

DAISIES.

'We are pretty little flowers
Growing in the grass ;
You can see us any day
You may chance to pass,
With our tiny yellow hats,
Fringed with white around,
On a long and slender stem,
Rising from the ground.

• We hear the ring
 Of pleasant spring,
When others sleep around ;
 And first of all
 Obey his call,
To wake up from the ground.

' All round about our tiny roots
Our leaves are to be seen :
When yet in buds we hide our heads
Beneath their shelter green.
We're very modest in our wants,
Our only drink and meat,
Are sparkling raindrops now and then
Or dewdrops cool and sweet.
We hear the ring, etc.



' We rise up early with the first
Bright gleam of morning light,
Keep wide awake the livelong day,
And slumber all the night.

We are not proud, nor care the least
Where fortune throws our lot,
Around the mansions of the great,
Or by the peasant's cot.
We hear the ring, etc.

' We smile as bright, and bloom as fair,
As many petals yield,
Upon the castle's velvet lawn,
As in the village field.
In every meadow, grove, or wood,
In all the country places,
Peeping here and peeping there,
You'll find our smiling faces.
We hear the ring, etc.

' And when the snow has passed away
With winter cold and drear,
The children greet us with a smile,
And cry : " The spring is here !"
And then they saunter in the fields,
And rush about the lanes,
And gather us by handfuls,
To make us into chains.
We hear the ring, etc.

‘ We love the living, and we love
 The peaceful, sleeping dead,
And do our best to beautify
 Full many a grassy bed.
We never dare to interfere
 Where costly flowers abound,
But always choose the lowly
 Or the quite neglected mound.
 We hear the ring, etc.

‘ Now, when you see us in the grass,
 Do, please, step lightly by ;
Don’t trample on us wantonly,
 If we are crushed we die.
And should you like to know the name
 Of these small flowers so sweet,
The English call us “Daisies ;”
 The French, “les Marguerites.”
 We hear the ring, etc.’

DISOBEDIENT CHARLEY.

THIS naughty Charley was a boy
Of eight or nine years old,
Who not to venture on the ice
Had many times been told.
Mamma had said the ice was thin,
Had not been freezing long ;
To safely bear young Charley's weight
It should be firm and strong.
The pond was very deep and wide ;
Unless the ice were sound,
It certainly would crack and break
And Charley might be drowned.
But Charley was a tiresome boy,
Who liked to have his way ;
And so he sulked and loudly cried
To go and skate that day.
Now in the afternoon there came
A messenger from town ;
To say papa was taken ill,
And would mamma go down ?

She kissed her boy and said : ' My dear,
Do let my word suffice,
And promise that while I'm away
You won't go on the ice.'

And Charley quickly gave his word,
And meant what then he said ;
He promised he would not go out,
But play indoors instead.

And poor mamma went off to town
Quite satisfied that he,
While she was gone, would try his best
A wise, good boy to be.

Alas ! the afternoon turned bright,
And Charley soon did say :
' I'm certain if mamma were here
She'd send me out to play.

' She did not know this afternoon
The sun was going to shine ;
I'll just run out for half an hour,
And play while it is fine.

He ran about the lawn and walks,
Threw many a snow-white ball ;
And slid about, and laughed aloud
Each time he chanced to fall.

‘Now what a pity !’ soon he cried,
‘I’m not allowed to skate ;
I’ll run and look at our big pond
Before it gets too late.’

And when he saw it frozen o’er,
He thought : ‘Mamma was wrong ;
She has not been to look at it :
I’m sure the ice is strong.

‘There can’t be any danger just
Across it quick to slide ;
I’m sure in perfect safety
I’d reach the other side !’

So naughty Charley started off,
And thought it very nice ;
He reached the middle of the pond,
When—crack ! went all the ice.

It smashed like glass beneath his feet,
He tried to reach the brink ;
No solid footing could he find,
And soon began to sink.

He shrieked and screamed aloud for help,
With terror wild caught hold
Of bits of ice that floated near ;
His hands were numb with cold.



And soon he must have sunk and drowned,
But happily there past
The gardeners who heard his cries,
And ran to help him fast.

They got him out, I can't tell how,
And took him home to bed ;
Where he lay ill for many months :—
He'd hurt his leg and head.

His head got well, but not his leg,
The doctors came in vain ;
Poor little Charley never walked
Without a crutch again.

I've seen him shedding bitter tears,
And heard a smothered cry,
When he has slowly limped along,
While other boys ran by.

And often he has sadly said,
When watching friends at play :
'I wish I'd kept my word, mamma,
And not gone out that day.

'I wish I had not disobeyed,
Alas, alas ! that I
Through my own folly must remain
A cripple till I die.'

Now, little children, warning take ;

Learn early to obey,

Or, like poor crippled Charley,

You are sure to rue the day

You break a promise to mamma,

Who knows where danger's hid ;

'Tis pure affection teaches her

What pleasures to forbid.

THE VIOLET.

'I'm a little violet ;

In the woods I dwell,

Growing on the mossy banks,

Or in forest dell.

I am fair, of perfume rare

And you love me well.

'Sometimes white, and sometimes blue,

I'm always to be seen

Neatly hidden in my bed,

Mossy, cool, and green.

'Tis the ring of merry spring

Calls me out, I ween.

' I'm not very fond of heat,
Indeed, I'm half afraid
Of summer's brilliant, fiery glow
When I'm all arrayed,
Neatly dressed in my best,
So I choose the shade.



' And that is why I always bend
Towards the dewy earth ;
I've never raised my tiny head
Upwards since my birth.
In the wood, children good,
Gather me with mirth.

' I'm never lonely, for I find
The bees that come my way,
To gather precious honey,
Have always lots to say.
As they rest on my breast,
Suck my sweets away.

' I chatter to the merry birds
About me in the grass,
And to the other flowers that grow
Around me in a mass.
'Tis a pleasure in my leisure,
Thus the hours to pass.

' I load the pleasant morning breeze
With fragrance sweet and rare,
And love to hear the children cry :
" There must be violets there !
At our feet, oh, how sweet !
Gather them with care." '

PASSIONATE WILLY.

COME, children, gather round my knee,

And listen while I tell

What happened to a little boy

I once knew very well.

His name was Willy, and he was

Eleven or twelve years old ;

A very bright and clever boy,

At least so I've been told.

Like many boys, I grieve to say,

So passionate was he,

The slightest thing that vexed him, made

Him terrible to see.

His eyes would glare, his cheeks flush red,

He'd stamp with both his feet ;

And sometimes scream out naughty words

I dare not here repeat.

All this was very shocking, but

Far worse than all, I've heard

He'd often in a passion do

Things dreadfully absurd.

He was not master of himself,
And constantly would do
What in his calmer moments he
Was very sure to rue.

For instance, one fine day he went
Outside to fly his kite ;
Something went wrong with cord or string,
He could not pull it right.
He tried to fix it once or twice—
One of his angry fits
Came o'er him then, and lo, he tore
His pretty kite to bits.

Another day he went to town
To buy a fine bouquet,
A present for his grandmamma,
For it was her birthday.
Some schoolboy vexed him coming home,
Away he ran to fight ;
Forgetting quite his pretty flowers,
Which soon were ruined quite.

And now you'll hear what happened from
This very shocking fashion,
Of letting trifles constantly
Throw him in such a passion.
His chief companion was a dog,
In colour black and tan ;
And he was very fond of him—
He called him 'Clever Dan.'

Now Dan was really very wise :
He'd carry walking-sticks ;
He'd smoke a pipe, and do all sorts
Of funny, clever tricks.
He went with Willy every day
To school, to walk, or play ;
And always came when he was called ;
And never ran away.

One afternoon Will took him down
Upon the shore to swim ;
For many little friends had come
That day to play with him.

They all threw sticks, and watched the dog,
With merry laugh and shout,
Go in the water at their word,
And quickly bring them out.

But all at once poor Dan lay down,
And it was all in vain
The youngsters tried to make him go
And bring their sticks again.



And Willy's face grew very red,
His voice grew very stern ;
He did not like his friends to see
Dan's strange rebellious turn.

‘Oh, leave the dog alone!’ they cried;

Perhaps he’s cold or tired.’

‘I’ll have him go in once again!’

Cried Will, with passion fired.

And when the dog again refused,

He threw a great big stone,

And struck him on the back; poor Dan

Fell down with painful moan.

‘Oh, Willy! you have injured him!’

The boys in horror cried;

‘Poor Dan! poor Dan! what pain he’s in,

He writhes from side to side!’

Then Willy, who was cool again,

And full of wild alarms,

Picked up his moaning, wounded friend,

And bore him in his arms.

And tears of sorrow filled his eyes,

As when at home he said:

‘Mamma, I fear I’ve hurt poor Dan;

Please make a nice soft bed.’

And all day long he watched him, till
Papa came home at night,
And said 'Oh, we must poison him :
His back is broken quite !'

Then Willy sobbed most bitterly,
And earnestly did say,
If they would only spare his life,
He'd wait on him each day,
And never let him trouble be
To anyone beside.
'Twould break his heart, to think through him
Poor faithful Dan had died.

He told his father how he came
To give the cruel blow.
'The reason,' gravely said papa,
'That he refused you so,
Look here and see—his paw is cut,
And very badly too!
He's trodden on some broken glass ;
I'm quite ashamed of you !

‘Do pray, and try with all your might,
Your temper to subdue,
Or you’ll commit some dreadful act,
You all your life may rue,
If you allow to grow unchecked
Such anger, passion, strife,
A day may come when you may take
Some precious *human* life.

‘You’ve killed your dog, for certainly
You cannot think that I
In pain and anguish could permit
Dan always there to lie !
He’ll never stand or run again,
We cannot mend his spine ;
And sorely it distresses me
To hear him moan and whine.

There, wipe your eyes and go to bed,
For it is after eight.
I’ll go and buy the poison now,
Before it gets too late.

And if you're really full of grief
Such mischief to have done,
Just try and be a better boy ;
Good-night, my little son.'

And Willy thought his heart would break,
For, as he stroked Dan's head,
The brute, forgiving, licked his hand,
As though 'good-bye' he said.
And much he missed his faithful friend,
And tried, with all his might,
From that unlucky day, against
His temper quick to fight.

MAKING A NOSEGAY.

LET us go and gather flowers !
Children, run ;
Through the woods and forest bowers
We'll have fun.
In the fields and meadows gay,
In every nook,
For flowers to make a fine bouquet,
Let us look.

‘ There’s the golden Trefoil bright,
 On the rise,
And the Foxglove to the right,
 Here’s a prize !
There’s a poppy red as fire
 In the wheat ;
Cornflower too a little higher
 At your feet.

‘ See the purple Mallow there,
 Buds and all ;
And some pink Valerian fair,
 By the wall.
There’s some purple Toad-Flax too,
 In the niche ;
And a lovely Bell Flower blue
 By the ditch.

‘ There’s a wild Convolvulus,
 Oh, how fair !
And some sweet Clematis white
 Over there ;

See the scarlet Pimpernels
On the hill,
And the blue Forget-me-nots
In the rill.



‘ Harebells blue, why there’s a bed
By the tree ;
And those roses, white and red,
Bring to me.
Honeysuckle twining near
Sweet Woodbine !
Climb up quick and bring it here ;
That is fine.

' There's some yellow Meadow-Sweet
By the bog ;
Crimson Loosestrife at your feet—
Mind the frog
There's some creeping ivy, see,
On the beech ;
Bring a spray of it to me—
Can you reach ?

' Now a sprig of Hemlock white
From the bank ;
'Tis so pretty, fine, and light,
Poison rank.
There are Water-lilies, see,
In the brook,
And some Water-cress for tea,
Only look !

And the simple Daisy too,
In we'll wedge ;
Get the Ragged-Robin, do,
From the hedge.

Now a sprig of Heather pink,
Plenty more ;
And some Trefoil—stop, I think
We'd some before.

'Now some dewy fern-leaves, say,
Something green,
In our lovely wild bouquet,
Should be seen.
Break me off a spray or so,
Dark as night,
From the Blackberry-bush below :
It's finished quite.'

ROBIN REDBREAST.

WHY HE SPENDS WINTER IN ENGLAND.

A ROBIN, dressed in all his best,
Brown velvet coat and crimson vest ;
Warbling loud in a hawthorn tree,
Oh, what a charming beau was he !
Carolling merrily all alone,
Bright and gay, in his sweetest tone.

Well, all at once he heard a rush,
That caused him his sweet song to hush :
In some alarm he looked around,
And lo, the tree was filled, he found,
With every sort of feathered guest,
And all of them for travelling dressed.

‘Oh my !’ exclaimed the Robin ; ‘why,
I wonder where they’re going to fly !
How they scream, and chirp, and chatter !
Something dreadful is the matter !’
And looking round he asked, in song :
‘Pray, sirs, has anything gone wrong ?’

Then Mister Swallow, flying down,
Thus answered Robin, with a frown :
‘You little stupid, don’t you know,
The winter’s coming ? frost and snow,
Cold wind and rain, would kill us quite ;
So we set off this very night.’

‘Dear me !’ the Robin cried, ‘do you
Believe that dreadful story true ?’

The sun is bright, the flowers are gay.
I've heard that some folks fly away,
But cannot think why they do so ;
I don't believe in frost and snow.

Then said the Swallow, looking wise :
' So say all youngsters of your size.
You only left the nest this year,
And have not learned the cold to fear.
Pray, will your song be quite as sweet,
When you find nothing left to eat ?

Another month, and nothing green
About the earth will then be seen ;
But grass, and leaves, and all below,
Lie buried 'neath a mass of snow.
You'd better come with us away :
You'll die of hunger if you stay.'

' Oh no,' the Robin cried ; ' I won't :
I don't believe this tale, I don't.
I've often heard my mother say
She ne'er from winter flew away ;
Perhaps, like her, I'll manage here,
Should it be *really* what you fear.'

'Poor little fellow!' foolish bird!
The way you talk is quite absurd.
But I must go,' went on the Swallow,
'To gather all who wish to follow.
Good-bye! good-bye! you won't be here
When we come back again next year.'



The Robin felt a little queer,
And looked around to calm his fear.
The sun was shining warm and bright,
The leaves were crimson in his light,
The brook was rippling clear along,
And soon he gaily broke in song.

But he was wrong ;—for, after all,
A month from that the snow *did* fall ;
Jack Frost came out, and in a trice
Covered the streams and brooks with ice,
Shrivalled the leaves and berries, too :
'Oh!' cried the bird, 'what shall I do ?

'In vain I've searched the frozen ground,
There's not a slug here to be found ;
Not a thing on shrub, or tree :
Oh dear ! what will become of me ?'
And trembling with great fear and doubt,
In sore distress he flew about.

No shelter could he find to rest,
To dry his wings, or plume his breast ;
Down came the snow more heavy, too,
And soaked his feathers through and through.
At last he left the woods to seek
Down in the village food to eat.

Now, in the rectory parlour snug,
Before the fire, upon the rug,

There sat the rector's little girl,
Whose head was thick with clustering curl,
Learning her task with hearty will,
When Robin flew to the window-sill.

'Papa! papa!' she softly cried,
As soon the tiny head she spied;
'Please open wide the window, do;
I think he'll hop right in—do you?
Oh, do not frighten him away,
'Twill be such fun if he will stay.'

The rector rose and kindly smiled—
He loved to please his pretty child.
The window-frame he opened wide,
Then drew the little girl aside . . .
And told her patiently to wait:
The bird was on the garden-gate.

'There! now he's back, papa!' she said,
Catching sight of the Robin Red.
'How he turns about! he's shy,
Timid, frightened, coy, or sly.
He's looking if the cat's about;
He need not fear, I've turned her out.'

On the carpet then she spread
Many crumbs of soft, white bread.
Thought the Robin : ' Here, at least,
I've found indeed a famous feast !'
And rendered bold by urgent need,
He ventured on the floor to feed,

As soon as he had had enough
Of the tempting dainty stuff,
He flew upon a holly-tree,
And sang his thanks right lustily.
' And now,' said Floy, ' he'd be quite right,
If he'd a house to pass the night.

' There's one my uncle gave the boys
In their new box of farm-house toys :
I mean the gaily-painted stable,
I think poor Robin would be able
To shelter there from snow and storm ;
We'll put some wool to keep him warm.'

Against the wall the house was tied,
And care they took to place inside,
As well as wool, a heap of bread,
And bits of meat for Robin Red.

And Florrie cried : ' There, poor Redbreast,
I hope you'll like your winter nest.'

From the boughs of the holly-tree
All they did the bird could see ;
And though he was too shy to stay,
Or venture near while it was day,
When night her veil of darkness drew,
Straight to the cosy house he flew.

And while the snow lay on the ground,
Nice food and shelter there he found,
And learned to love the little girl,
With sparkling eye and auburn curl,
Who every morning softly crept
To see if in his house he'd slept.

And every morning warbled he
Merry songs in the holly-tree ;
And when the frost and snow were o'er,
And leaves and flowers out once more,
He came one day to sing ' Good-bye,'
Then to his forest home did fly.

‘Hallo!’ a voice said in his ear,
‘Why, Robin Redbreast, are *you* here ?
I’ve just returned from foreign clime ;
Where have *you* been this dreadful time ?
I thought you long since would be dead.
Pray tell me how have you been fed ?’

’Twas Mister Swallow spoke, and so
The Robin told him all we know,
And said : ‘ You see I did quite right,
When I refused to go that night.
I’ll never fly from winter drear,
But stay in England all the year.

‘ I’m certain I shall always find
Some children pleasant, good, and kind ;
And I shall be a welcome guest,
For all admire my bright red breast,
And seldom fail some crumbs to throw,
When I come hopping on the snow.’

RAINDROPS.

‘WHENCE come your sparkling raindrops,
Oh tell me, cooling showers,
That feed our woods and forests,
And cheer our drooping flowers?’

‘’Tis from the mighty ocean
Our drops so gently rise,
Until in clouds of vapour
We fill the lowering skies.

‘The wind to land conveys us,
In answer to the cry
Of parched-up trees and blossoms,
Just at the point to die.

‘Each thirsty plant we nourish,
In passing on our way ;
And swell the streams and brooklets
Where cattle love to stray.

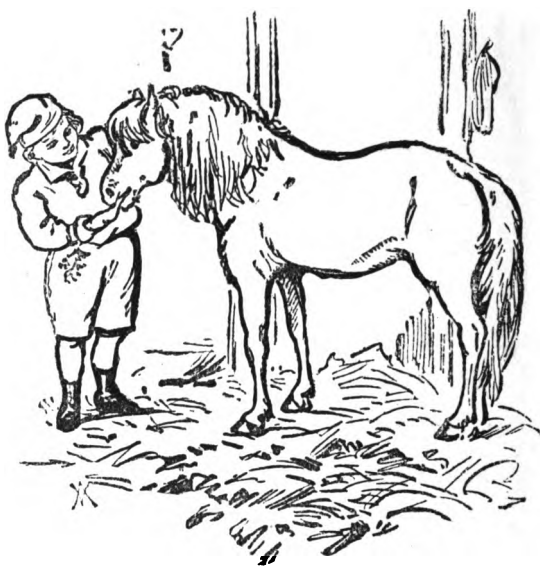
‘And when they’ve all had plenty,
We sink beneath their feet,
And wander on in darkness
Until a spring we meet.

'At last we join the river,
And hurry side by side
Until we reach our cradle,
The mighty ocean wide.'

DOUBTING FRED.

I KNEW a silly little boy,
His name was doubting Fred ;
So called because he never would
Believe what others said.
He'd question why ; and then would say :
'I don't agree with you ;
You must have made some strange mistake ;
I'm sure that can't be true.'
Fred was a very happy boy,
His parents were so kind ;
As loving, and as generous too,
As any you could find.
They bought him everything they thought
Would please and give him fun ;
They thought they could not do too much
For this, their only son.

He'd story-books and splendid toys,
With which he used to play ;
And many pets—but more than all,
He loved his pony grey.



Such pleasant rides upon his back
He every morning got ;
He never had to use his whip
To make that pony trot.

He'd gallop gaily down the hill,
Walk up the other side ;
And Freddy loved his little horse,
And loved his daily ride.

This pony always used to neigh,
As loud as he was able,
Whenever Freddy came about
The meadows or the stable.

He'd take a carrot from his hand,
A cake, or piece of bread,
And paw the ground, and nod his head,
As thanks for being fed.

One evening Fred was going out,
His hoop in hand, to play ;
He met his father in the drive,
Who seeing him did say :

'Be very careful with your hoop ;
Don't bowl it here, my child.
The horses might take fright at it ;
You know they're very wild.'

‘Frighten a horse ! a great strong horse
My iron hoop, oh no !
Why, father, it’s a simple toy !
Oh no, I don’t think so.’

‘’Tis quite enough to frighten them ;
So, Freddy, when I’m gone,
Don’t wheel it here, about the drive ;’
And then papa passed on.

Thought Fred : ‘ He only talks in fun ;
There can’t be any harm
In wheeling here ; the horses are
Too wise to take alarm.’

And so he bowled it up and down,
With and against the wind,
And never heard when something quick
Came trotting up behind.

Just then the wind took off his hat,
And blew it in the lake ;
Away ran Fred, and laughing left
His hoop its course to take.

Returning to the drive again,
Just judge of his surprise—
His pony lay upon the ground !
He scarce believed his eyes.

The little groom, who'd brought him round,
Sat rubbing shins and head ;
' 'Twas that 'eer hoop that did it, sir,'
To Fred he gravely said.

' The wind drove it atween his legs,
Too quick for me to see ;
He stumbled, threw me on my head.
I ain't hurt—but *he* be.'

He did indeed seem badly hurt ;
He lay upon his side,
And did not move ; so Fred ran off,
' Papa ! papa !' he cried.

And very sad his father looked
On that poor pony grey,
While Freddy, pale and anxious, stood,
The picture of dismay.

The gardeners, who were working near,
Came quickly to the spot,
And Freddy heard one whisper low :
‘ I think he must be shot !’

‘ What, shot ! my pony shot !’ he cried,
‘ Because he’s hurt his leg !
Papa, we want a doctor here ;
Please send for one, I beg.’

‘ A doctor, Fred, could do no good ;
The leg is broken quite.
What Robin said is but too true ;
He must be shot to-night.’

Then Freddy wept and loudly sobbed,
But wept and sobbed in vain ;
They all declared his pony grey
Would never stand again.

He was in pain, had best be shot
At once without delay.

They’d get their spades, and dig a hole
To bury him straightway.

As Freddy kissed the pretty head,
And stroked the glossy mane,
His father said : ' My little son,
I grieve to give you pain.

' But still, you know, it's quite your fault,
For had you but believed
Your hoop was dangerous on the drive,
You would not now be grieved.

' It's true, I was not thinking then
Of your poor pony grey,
But of the carriage with mamma,
That soon will come this way.

' The horses might have taken fright,
As you came bowling round,
And run away and thrown her out,
All lifeless on the ground.

' We cannot cure your pony's leg,
And so he'll have to die ;
And you will have the sore distress
Of wishing him good-bye.

‘ The victim of your folly is
Your pretty pony grey ;
Be thankful, for your mother’s life
You might have thrown away.’

Poor Freddy thought his pony looked
With sad reproachful eye,
As though he’d say, could he but speak
‘ It’s all your fault I die.’

He could not bear to see him shot,
And so he ran away ;
And did not venture near the place
For many a long, sad day.

And oft repentant tears he shed,
And sore lamented he,
His pretty little favourite laid
Beneath the chestnut tree.

For never more he’d pleasant rides
Take on his pony grey ;
Nor hear the trot of little hoofs,
Nor that familiar neigh.

And from that day he lost his name
Of silly, doubting Fred ;
For after that he *did* believe
What older people said.

JOHN'S VISIT TO THE COUNTRY.

YOUNG John had always lived in town :

He had an aunt, and Uncle Will,
Who kept a farm in Devonshire ;
And as he had been very ill,
His father said he'd send him there,
To spend six months for change of air.

You cannot think how London John
Enjoyed the country green and sweet ;
To wander all about the farm,

Oh, was it not a famous treat !
He who had never seen wild flowers,
And never played in leafy bowers,

He thought he'd never seen a house
So charming, with its roof of thatch,
Its whitewashed, ivy-covered walls,
Its rustic porch and gate to match ;

The spreading trees, and garden too,
So gay with flowers of every hue.

The cheerful kitchen where they sat,
Its sanded floor and rafters wide,
With many a brawny ham and flitch
Of bacon hanging side by side ;
The blazing hearth and ancient settle,
The ticking clock and singing kettle.

The busy maids, so quaintly clad,
Good-humour sparkling on each face ;
The ample board of homely fare,
Strict cleanliness in every place.
The little parlour daily swept,
For honoured guests so neatly kept.

The tempting orchard stocked with trees,
The fruit, so ripe, and sweet, and rare,
The branches laden to the ground ;
John loved to play and linger there.
He thought it was a famous treat,
The cherries red to pluck and eat.

How pleasant 'twas to go and help,
The night before the market-day ;
To gather fruit and garden-stuff,
To send to town six miles away ;
To pack the cart at early dawn
With milk, eggs, butter, cheese, or brawn.

His good aunt laughed when John declared
To make some cheese he'd like to learn ;
And showed him how, and butter too,
In her old-fashioned, wooden churn.
And then he learned to milk the cows,
And drive the horses with the ploughs.

He helped to catch and shear the sheep,
To cut, and toss, and stack the hay ;
And every evening searched for eggs,
The naughty hens would lay astray.
The turkeys, ducks, and fowls he fed,
And crammed the geese with meal and bread.

He liked to watch the little pigs
Tumbling and tossing in their sty ;
And loved to catch the calves and lambs,
That fled when he came whistling by.

He fished for minnows in the brook,
And roamed the woods for flowers to look.

When Sunday came, he went to church,
To sit in uncle's high-backed pew ;
And hear the grey-haired rector pray,
And teach them what they ought to do.
To hear the peasants singing all,
With village children big and small.



Sometimes a golden sunbeam strayed,
And lingered o'er the pulpit high ;
And somehow always bore John's thoughts
Away beyond the clear blue sky

Stilled many a passing restless fit,
And made him more attentive sit.

Thus spring passed into summer warm ;
Then red and brown succeeded green,
As over every forest tree

Bright autumn tints could well be seen ;
And Johnny learned, with many a sigh,
The day of his return was nigh.

A healthy boy he was to-day,
So plump and strong, and brown and red ;
His father said that he had grown,
In those six months, a good half head.
It suited him, the country air,
The rustic life, and homely fare.

He said, if John were very good,
And worked right well at school, in class,
He should go down to uncle's farm,
Next holidays with him to pass.
Poor John disliked, like many folk,
The London bricks, and fog, and smoke

Though pleased to see his parents dear,
He longed for that glad, happy day,
When midsummer would set him free,
With Uncle Will to go and stay ;
And what he did when came that time,
I'll tell you in another rhyme.

JOHN AND THE BIG BULL.

'Now, John, my boy,' said Uncle Will,
As John went out to play,
'Remember, my big bull is out ;
Keep far from him, I pray.

'The savage beast is in the field,
Just down by neighbour Vaughan's ;
Keep clear of him, you'd have no chance
Against his ugly horns.'

'All right,' cried John, 'I'll recollect
I won't go near the brute
But coming home to tea to-night,
I'll take the other route.'

Alas for Johnny's giddy head !
He very soon forgot ;
Returning to the farm he strayed
Close to the dreaded spot.

' Oh dear !' he cried, ' I'm in the field ;'
And looking round, he spied
The savage monster lying down
Just at the other side.

' What shall I do ? on hands and knees,
Along the hedge I'll creep ;
Perhaps he will not notice me,
I hope he's fast asleep.'

With beating heart he crept along,
Afraid of being caught ;
When all at once he heard behind
A loud and angry snort.

The brute had caught a glimpse of him,
Alas, it was too true !
For bellowing, roaring, tail in air,
Towards John he quickly flew.

Poor little John sprang to his feet,
And looked half wild with fear,
To see if any hiding place,
Or any help was near.

About a hundred yards ahead
He saw a fine oak tree,
And thought, 'If I can climb up there,
I shall in safety be.'



And so he ran with all his might,
Knowing he ran from death ;
While close behind he almost thought
He felt the bull's hot breath.

He prayed for strength to reach the tree,
And prayed most wisely too ;
The ugly horns just grazed his foot
As up the trunk he flew.

And when he sat in safety down
Upon a bough at last,
He looked below and saw a sight,
That made his heart beat fast.

The bull was tearing with his horns
The ground all round the tree,
Prancing, roaring, bellowing loud ;
'Twas terrible to see,

John wiped the sweat from off his brow,
And stilled his beating breast ;
' I'm quite safe here, thank God,' he thought,
' And shall have time to rest.

' He soon will gallop off again,
I sha'n't have long to wait ;
And when he's gone, I'll scramble down,
And scamper to the gate.'

But hours passed by ; beneath the tree
The bull still angry lay,
And very tired upon the bough
John was obliged to stay.

The evening slowly wore away,
And night's dark shades drew nigh,
But still the bull was by the tree ;
Poor John began to cry.

'Oh dear,' he cried, 'it's getting dark ;
They'll think that I am lost.
I'll fall asleep, I know I shall,
And tumble and be tossed.'

Meanwhile his aunt and Uncle Will
Were saying, wild with fright,
'Sure John has had some accident
To keep him out to-night.'

At half-past ten they called the men,
With lights and staves went out,
All up and down the lonely lanes
To search and look about.

They met a little peasant lad,
Who said mysteriously :
' I heard a dreadful hollering
By yon big spreading tree.

' And sitting on the topmost bough,
Was summat big and white ;
I didn't like the look of it,
It's give me quite a fright.'

' It must be John,' cried Uncle Will,
' Poor John, as sure as fate !'
And off they helter-skelter ran,
And breathless reached the gate.

' Johnny ! Johnny ! are you there ?'
And Johnny heard them shout.
' Yes, uncle, I am in the tree ;
The bull won't let me out.'

The savage brute was soon secured,
With ropes they bound him fast ;
And John slipped down, and cried with joy,
' Hurrah ! I'm free at last.'

How glad he was once more to see
The kitchen warm and bright,
To eat a good and hearty meal,
And then to bid good-night.

He kissed his aunt and uncle kind,
Then ran upstairs to bed ;
And ere he closed his eyes in sleep,
A thankful prayer he said.

He dreamed of savage bulls all night,
And told his aunt next day,
Through all his life he'd do his best
From bulls to keep away.

JOHN AND THE BLACKBERRIES.

JUST down the village, by the church,
There stood the blacksmith's shed,
And often through the open door
John poked his curly head ;
He never tired of listening
To the hammer's cheery sound,
And loved to watch the roaring fire,
And rosy sparks fly round.

The blacksmith was a kindly man,
Who liked his merry guest ;
And always asked him to come in,
To chat a bit, or rest.
And John would blow the bellows big,
And rummage all about,
And make the smithy oft resound
With many a laughing shout.

Sometimes the wife would bring her work
And pleasantly sit down
To hear, with open eyes and mouth,
John's tales of London town.
Their little Tom, of eight years old,
When school was out, would run
To play with him upon the green ;
They'd many a bit of fun.

One morning Johnny sallied forth
To have his usual chatter ;
He found the honest wife in tears,
And cried : ' Oh, what's the matter ?'

‘Ah,’ sighed the smith, ‘she weeps because
An accident we’ve had ;
In shoeing a bad-tempered horse,
He kicked my little lad.

‘His leg is broken ; it is set,
But he’s in dreadful pain.
The wife is frightened, fearing he
May never walk again.’
‘May I go in and look at him ?’
Said John, with looks of sorrow.
‘Well, not to-night,’ replied the smith ;
‘You may, perhaps, to-morrow.’

Then John ran home and told his aunt,
Who soon went down to see
If she, to that young invalid,
Of any use could be.
She killed a chicken, and she made
Some tasty broth to send
By Johnny, when he went next day
To see his little friend.

And every afternoon John went
Down to the blacksmith's house ;
And sat by Tommy's bed and talked,
As quiet as a mouse.
He read him pretty stories too,
And brought him pretty toys,
And always was most kind and good,
And never made a noise.

Meanwhile, the doctor said the leg
Would soon be well and strong ;
But Tommy grew quite thin and pale,
With lying still so long.
And as the summer days passed by,
A prisoner still was he,
And oft he longed to run about,
And sobbed most bitterly.

A lonely time he would have had,
But for kind little John,
Who many a weary afternoon
Made pleasantly roll on

His daily visit was a treat
Tom valued more and more,
Propped up in bed he always watched
Till John came through the door.

One day he said, quite coaxingly :
‘ Dear Johnny, would you mind
Going to the woods for me
Some blackberries to find ?
I know that they are ripe and sweet,
I’d like some stewed for tea—
Father and mother have no time,
Do get some, John, for me.’

Then Johnny’s face grew rather grave,
For, truth to say, that day
His uncle was to take him
To a horse-fair, miles away.
Now John had never been before,
And wanted much to go ;
But how to tell his little friend,
He really did not know.

So very thin, and tired, and pale,
Looked Tommy lying there,
The blackberries would be sure to please
But then—the famous fair !
He might not have another chance
A real horse-fair to see ;
He'd like to go—unless poor Tom
Would disappointed be.

‘ Poor little chap,’ at last he thought,
‘ How thin he is, and white ;’
And then he answered pleasantly :
‘ I’ll get them, Tom—all right.
I’ll get your little basket full
Before two hours are past,
I won’t be long ;’ and to the woods
Kind Johnny scampered fast.

And when at noon he came again,
The basket running o’er
With juicy berries, such a smile .
He’d never seen before,

As that which broke on Tom's pale face ;
Poor John felt full of glee,
Although he'd missed the famous fair,
Such gratitude to see.



He said : ' I'll go another day,
And get some more for you,
And mind you ask for everything
You take a fancy to.
I hope you'll like them when they're stewed,
But I can't stay to see,
For uncle's gone to Crosby Fair,
And aunt will want her tea.'

But what was Johnny's great surprise,
When running down the lane,
To meet his Uncle Will ! he cried :
 ' How soon you're home again !'
 ' Ah, soon indeed !' quoth Uncle Will ;
 ' I found, much to my sorrow,
Somehow I'd calculated wrong—
 The horse-fair is to-morrow.'

Then was not Johnny glad to think
 Good-natured he had been,
For Tom would not have had the fruit,
 Nor he the fair have seen.
He *did* enjoy it, when next day
 He and his uncle went,
And, as he told his little friend,
 A famous time they spent.

MR. AND MRS. JENNY WREN AND
THEIR PRETTY NEST.

Two little birds did once agree
To go and live in a hollow tree—

Mr. and Mrs. Wren.

They talked about it merrily,
Filling the air with melody,
Discussing where and when.

Said Jenny Wren : ‘ I know a spot,
Not too cool, nor yet too hot,
And quite close to the ground ;
Where, undisturbed by any noise,
We’ll build, unseen by curious boys,
A nest that can’t be found.’

Thus decided, off they flew,
To see if Jenny’s choice would do ;
And quickly did discern
A little nook, hid ’neath a mass
Of flowers, and moss, and waving grass,
And many a sheltering fern.

Said Jenny : ' Pray admire my taste ;
'Tis just the place ; so let us haste
To work without delay.

For many a straw and supple twig,
We must collect, our house to rig ;
And wool, and moss, and hay.'

From morn till eve they bravely worked ;
No pains they spared, no trouble shirked,
To build their pretty nest.

And many a day slipt by before
Their task was done, their labour o'er,
And they could stop and rest.

Soon in the house, thus deftly made,
Three pretty eggs wee Jenny laid.
And then, the whole day long,
She kept them snug beneath her wings ;
While Wren, who loved the tiny things,
Amused her with his song.

For fifteen days so sat the bird ;
And then a feeble chirp they heard,
And saw a little beak.

Thus, one by one, the eggs all broke,
And out of each a bird awoke.
Wren flew some food to seek.

I cannot tell how charmed was he
With these dear birdies, one, two, three.
He worked from morn till night ;
And food of all kinds to them took,
And water from the rippling brook,
To Jenny's great delight.

The nestlings soon were covered too,
With fluffy down of brownish hue ;
Their wings began to sprout.
Said Jenny : ' They will soon be strong,
And able quite to hop along ;
And then we'll take them out.

' And up and down our greenwood home,
The livelong day, we'll gladly roam—
The children, you and I.
And we will teach them what is sweet
And good for little birds to eat ;
And show them how to fly.'

She never guessed, poor little thing,
The hapless fate next day would bring
To end their happy time.
And if you'd like to hear the rest
Of Jenny and this pretty nest,
Pray read another rhyme.

THE END OF JENNY'S PRETTY NEST:

A TRUE STORY.

ONE morning early John and Tom,
In playing chanced to roam
Close to the spot where Jenny Wren
Had built her happy home.
Her heart beat quick as nearer still
Came merry laugh and shout,
Until her nerves could bear no more,
And, frightened, she flew out.

'Hallo!' cried Tom; 'John, did you see
Just close to that old birch,
A bird flew out? Why, there must be
A nest; come, let us search!'

And looking 'mid the grass and fern,
They found, with noisy glee,
Poor little Jenny's pretty nest,
Containing young ones three.

Said John, 'We'll put the nest inside
My dead lark's wire cage ;
And place it here beneath the tree.
The mother, I'll engage,



Will venture through the little door,
Her young to feed, and then
She'll never have the sense to find
The right way out again.'

They put the nest inside the cage,
And walked away, and lo !
The nestlings cried aloud for food,
And Jenny said she'd go.
And through the little door she hopped
And fed them every one ;
Then, silly birdie, tried to fly
Straight upwards when she'd done.

Meanwhile the little father Wren
Astonished stood outside,
As to escape the cruel bars
Poor Jenny vainly tried.
And thus when John and Tom returned
They found their captives four ;
And joyfully they seized the cage,
And firmly shut the door.

But Jenny Wren was very wild,
And flew about in fear.
'Dear me,' said Tom, 'she'll break her wings
Against the wires, that's clear ;

Suppose I take her in my hand,
She'll carry safer so.
Just open wide the cage—take care !
Oh dear ! you've let her go.

'What shall we do? Without her wings
The young will soon be dead ;
They're sure to die of cold to-night,
While we're asleep in bed.
Let's try again,' cried little John ;
It would not me surprise
To catch her in the cage again :
Birds are not very wise.'

And so once more they placed the cage,
Beneath the old birch-tree ;
The little Wrens, from 'mid the boughs,
The boys could plainly see.
But though they both looked very grave,
Suspecting danger nigh,
The mother could not bear to hear
Her young ones' plaintive cry.

And in the cage once more she hopped,
And let herself be caught ;
But when the boys came laughing near,
For liberty she fought
So madly and so wildly that
Their handkerchiefs they tied
Around the cage to make it dark
And keep her quiet inside.

They reached the stable ere they took
The handkerchief away,
Their little prisoners to inspect.
Then Tom cried out : ' I say,
She's scratched and bleeding ! John, look here,
She's hurt her head and wing
With flying up against the wires,
Poor trembling little thing !

' I don't believe she'll settle here,
She'll break her heart and die ;
Without her we can't rear the young,
Suppose we let her fly ?

We'll put the nest back in its place,
And watch it all the same;
And when the young can eat alone
We'll take them home to tame.'

'All right,' said John, 'that will be best;
We'll take the cage straight back.'
They did ; but near the wood they met
The under-gardener, Jack.
He asked them what they had in there ;
They told the story through,
Then opened wide the little door—
Away poor Jenny flew.

She perched upon an apple tree,
And chirped in grateful tone,
When thoughtless Jack took from the ground
And threw at her a stone.
He only meant to frighten her,
At least so he declared :
He aimed too well ; they saw her fall !
Poor murdered little bird !

Well, John and Tom were deeply grieved ;
She was quite dead, they found :
They dug a hole, and buried her,
With leaves and flowers wrapped round.



And then, not knowing, silly boys,
The father Wren was left,
They thought that they must try to rear
The young ones thus bereft.

They covered them with cotton-wool,
And bread and meal they poked,
With little sticks, right down their throats ;
The birds were almost choked.
At night they placed them near their bed,
Determined to awake
And feed them all at early dawn :
Alas ! they slept till eight.

They jumped up quickly then and rushed
For that unwholesome food ;
But what with hunger, cold, and fright,
One only of the brood
Was gasping still; he quickly died.
Said Tom, 'We've done our best ;
But I *do* wish that you and I
Had never touched that nest.'

MRS. GRAMMAR'S FAMILY.

'MY name is Mrs. Grammar, ma'am,
And I have children nine ;
I'll introduce you to the same,
They're really very fine.

'First come the twins, my "Articles,"
Called "A" or "An," and "The" ;
Although they're very small, they are
Most useful, ma'am, to me.

'My daughter, "Substantive" or "Noun,"
Has rather feeble sight ;
So when she walks, the Articles
Attend to keep her right.

' Without these clever little twins
Her way she'd seldom find ;
They're always found in front of her,
They never step behind.

' Dear Noun's a very wealthy girl,
And wealth, you know, brings cares ;
Why, everything you see, and feel,
And touch, and smell, is hers.

' Sometimes she has too much to do ;
In such a pressing case,
Her little brother " Pronoun " goes,
And kindly takes her place.

' He's always ready, darling boy,
To help whene'er he can ;
And answers quite as well as she,
The clever little man.

' My daughter " Adjective " as well,
To help dear " Noun " is ready ;
She is an active, pretty girl,
And bright, and good, and steady.

‘ But very shy ; in fact, *alone*,
She will not walk about ;
’Tis chiefly with her sister “ Noun,”
Dear “ Adjective ” goes out.

‘ Then comes my eldest, Master “ Verb,”
A busy boy is he ;
He’s always doing, idle yet
I never him did see.

‘ He runs, he jumps, he works, he walks,
He hears, he calls, he peeps ;
He swims, he rides, he sings, he talks,
He sows, he ploughs, he reaps.

‘ He hunts, he kills, he cooks, he eats,
He hops, he skips, he dances ;
He scolds, he shouts, he knocks, he beats,
He roars, he kicks, he prances.

‘ He builds, he cuts, he saws, he digs,
He trembles, shivers, shakes ;
He pulls, he rows, he sails, he rigs,
He offers, gives, and takes.

‘ He sleeps, he snores, he laughs, he cries,
He thinks, he winks, he wonders ;
He learns, he turns, he sighs, defies,
He sinks, he blinks, he blunders.

‘ My daughter “ Adverb ” loves to help,
Her ever busy brother ;
She waits on “ Verb ” and “ Adjective,”
First one and then the other.

‘ When they show signs of feebleness,
Of working weakly, badly,
She quickly, brightly, runs to help,
So wisely, nicely, gladly.

‘ My “ Preposition ” has her work
To go amongst the others ;
And keep together, and connect
Her sisters and her brothers.

‘ And very well she does it too ;
Of her good care bereft,
I’m very sure my girls and boys
Would wander right and left.

‘ She’s under, over, off, between,
She’s in, she’s through, about ;
She’s near, beyond, behind, before,
She’s up, she’s down, without.

‘ I have some queer relations too,
Called “ Sentences ” and “ Phrases ” ;
The way they fly and rush about,
With wonder me amazes.

‘ It’s dear “ Conjunction’s ” hourly work,
No matter what the weather,
To follow them when wandering,
And keep them all together.

‘ Last comes my “ Interjection,” he’s
A most provoking boy ;
Though I’m his mother, I must own
He is a great annoy.

‘ Sometimes he’s rude, and cries : “ Hallo !
“ O ! ah ! pish ! tush ! foh ! fie ! ”
And then he grows absurd and sighs,
“ Alas ! aye ! hem ! hush ! heigh ! ”

' These are my children, you'll do well
Their friendship soon to make,
If you would speak and write without
A blunder or mistake.'

FISHER-BOY JIM.

IN a simple wooden cottage
Built upon the shore,
Lived little Jim, the fisher-boy,
Of ten years old, not more ;
Such a bonny lad was he,
Playing by the briny sea.

His sire had been a fisherman,
But he long since was dead,
Jim and his mother lived alone,
And got their daily bread
By selling shrimps and fish beside ;
They caught them fresh at every tide.

It was a very pleasant life,
The mornings thus to spend ;
Then, while his mother boiled the shrimps,
Jim sat his nets to mend ;

The shrimps all ready, up and down
They cried them in the neighbouring town.

The summer passed, and winter came,
Bleak, frosty, cold and wild ;
And Jim's poor mother soon fell sick.
Though he was but a child,
When suffering sore she lay in bed,
He had to earn their daily bread.

And oh, it was so very sad,
The lad grew wild with fear,
Above the whistling wind at night,
His mother's cough to hear ;
And breaking on the rocky shore,
The mighty ocean's angry roar.

An awful storm had kept them both
Quite wide awake one night ;
Till, tired and cold, his mother said :
'D' you think the fire would light ?
I'm sure a cup of nice hot tea
Would really warm and comfort me.'

Then Jim crept from his little bed,
Some clothes upon him drew,
And made a fire, then crossed the room,
The cupboard to search through ;
'What shall we do ?' he sadly said ;
'There's neither tea, nor milk, nor bread.

'Twill soon be light, and then I'll go,
And take the nets and try
If I can't catch some shrimps to sell.
There, mother dear, don't cry :
As soon as ever it is light,
I'll go and work with all my might.'

With naked feet, and half-clad limbs,
Behold poor Jimmy stand,
And in the waves throw out his nets
From off a bank of sand ;
A basket near to hold the gains
That should reward his honest pains.

His feet and hands became quite numb,
The nets he scarce could draw,
And very thankful was he when
The basket full he saw.

He turned—oh, how his courage sank !
The water had enclosed the bank.

‘ It’s rising fast ! I shall be drowned !

Oh, save me quick !’ he cried ;
Only the whistling, roaring wind
And flowing waves replied.



In vain he searched, no help was near ;
Poor Jimmy’s heart beat loud with fear.

‘ Poor mother, she will never know,
But wait expecting me,
When I am lying cold and dead
In yonder sparkling sea.

And then he fell upon his knees,
And prayed aloud, ' Oh, save me, please !'

And not in vain above the wind
Went up the piteous cry ;
He'd hardly risen when he saw
A white sail drawing nigh.
He madly waved his little coat,
And shouted wildly : ' Send a boat !'

It was the squire's sailing yacht,
And soon a boat was lowered ;
The crew had seen his wild despair,
And took him safe on board.
The squire heard his woeful tale,
Why he was there in such a gale.

Arrived in port he bought his shrimps,
And paid him right well too ;
And his kind lady went to see
If Jim's sad tale were true.
The wooden cottage on the shore
Had never had such luck before.

A doctor kind was sent, whose skill
Was able before long
To cure the widow's dreadful cough,
And make her well and strong.
And never from that day, 'tis said,
Jim or his mother wanted bread.

CHARLEY'S GREEN CATERPILLAR; OR, THE BUTTERFLY'S HISTORY.

PART I.

'Twas evening, and the setting sun,
In streams of golden light,
Was falling gently on the earth
To bid a last good-night.

The flowers had closed their petals bright,
Each bird had hushed its song,
And shadows from the foliage
Were falling thick and long.

No sound was heard beyond the wind's
Soft murmur through the leaves,
The lowing cattle, and the hum
Of gleaners 'mid the sheaves.

Upon the hill a stately hall,
With many a turret crowned,
Stood in the midst of noble trees,
With smiling lands around.

Beside a window, opening low
Upon the well-kept lawn,
There stood a curly-headed boy,
In attitude forlorn.

All red and swollen were the eyes
That should be bright as heaven,
All stained with tears the chubby cheeks
Of this wee man of seven.

He clambered out upon the walk,
And gazed in tearful woe
Around the grounds, as though he were
Uncertain where to go.

At last he ran along a path
Where grew a spreading tree,
And sitting down beneath its shade,
He sobbed most bitterly.

His little heart seemed bursting quite,
He wept and wept again ;
And when the tears no more would flow,
He moaned as though in pain.

‘ Good-evening,’ said a tiny voice ;
‘ What makes you moan and weep ?
Excuse my asking, but your sobs
Have roused me from my sleep.’

Then Charley rose and searched around,
But no one could he see :
‘ It’s my mistake,’ at last he thought ;
‘ There’s no one here but me.’

And once again his tears burst forth,
It would have made you sad
To see the grief, the bitter grief,
Of this poor little lad.

'Good-evening,' said the voice once more,
 'You seem in great distress ;
I'm wondering what is troubling you,
 But really cannot guess.'

'Who are you?' cried the little boy ;
 'And pray, where may you be ?
I've looked around, but cannot tell ;
 Who is it speaks to me ?'

'Look just behind you ; I am here,
 Upon a bush hard by.'
Then Charley searched, and spied at last
 A golden butterfly.

Perched right upon the blossom sweet
 Of climbing woodbine wild.

'Good-evening,' said the butterfly ;
 'Good-evening,' said the child.

'Why, was it *you* who spoke to me ?'
 He asked with opened eyes ;
'An insect talking !' he forgot
 His grief in his surprise.

‘Of course it was,’ she quick replied ;
‘I cannot get to sleep
While you are making such a noise.
What ~~is~~ it makes you weep ?’

Then Charley’s tears flowed fast again,
Afresh he sobbed and cried :
‘I weep because they say mamma,
My dear mamma, has died.

‘Four nights ago nurse woke me up,
And said mamma must die ;
And carried me to her bedside,
To bid a last good-bye.

‘I crept up close to her and called,
“Mamma !” and kissed her cheek ;
But though my arms were round her neck,
She did not move, nor speak.

‘Papa was there, and soon told nurse
To carry me away ;
And though I wept and pleaded hard,
They would not let me stay.

' And all next day nurse looked so sad,
And would not let me play ;
And when I asked to see mamma,
They said she'd gone away.

' The blinds were drawn, and all the house
Was dark and very still ;
And when I saw papa he seemed
So tired, and pale, and ill.

And now and then I angry grew,
And said, in rage and sorrow,
" I tell you I *will* see mamma."
" Yes, dear," said nurse, " to-morrow."

' But she is in her room downstairs ;
" Come, take me *now*," I cried.
" No, darling ; she is far away,"
My nurse, with tears, replied.

But, ling'ring ever near her room,
In spite of all they said,
I managed to slip in unseen,
And climbed upon the bed.

‘ There, in a long and narrow box,
Of polished wood so bright,
With curtain, frills, and pillow, too,
Of pretty satin white,

‘ Quite sound asleep, and beautiful,
Was laid my mother dear ;
I bent my head to kiss her lips,
Then screamed aloud with fear.

‘ She was so cold, and white, and still,
It frightened me to stay ;
My screaming brought papa upstairs,
Who carried me away.

‘ This morning black, black coaches came,
And stopped before our door,
And into one they put the box
I’d seen the night before.

“ Oh, nurse, mamma is in that box ;
She’s there asleep,” I said.

“ Yes, dear, they’re going to bury her,”
Said nurse, “ because she’s dead.”

'And when I stamped, and shrieking filled
The nursery with my cries,
She told me that mamma was now
An angel in the skies.

'But that's all nonsense ; she is there,
In that big box asleep.
How she will cry when she awakes !
'Tis *that* that makes me weep.'

'You need not weep, my little friend,'
The Butterfly now said ;
'So much the better 'tis for her,
If, as you say, she's dead.'

'So much the better !' Charley cried,
While tears broke forth anew,
'To be put down beneath the ground ;
Oh dear, what will she do !'

'I don't believe that she is there,'
The Butterfly replied.
'You don't believe that she is there ?
'I saw her !' Charley cried.

BUT. 'Ah, yes ; but that's no proof at all—
That she was there, I mean—
I wish that your mamma had been
A caterpillar green.'

CHAR. 'A caterpillar, my mamma !
Why, what a strange idea !'

BUT. 'In that case, I could tell you all ;
I died myself last year.'

CHAR. ' *You* died ! you curious Butterfly !
Whatever do you mean ?
That you are full of life to-day,
Is plainly to be seen.'

BUT. 'That's very true, yet all the same,
I really died last year.'

CHAR. 'You're talking nonsense, Butterfly.'

BUT. 'I'm not, indeed, my dear.'

'Excuse my contradicting you
So flatly,' Charley said ;
'But nothing ever comes to life,
That has been *really* dead.'

'I daresay you are very wise,
And know a great deal too :
But on this subject, please allow
That *I* know more than you.

'My pony's dead, my rabbits too,
Their life is over quite ;
And if mamma is dead, how can
She be an angel bright ?

'I *should* be glad if it were true,'
He added, with a moan.
'But *I feel sure* she's in the ground,
In darkness—all alone.'

BUT. 'And *I feel sure* that she enjoys
Some new and happier birth,
Like many another living thing
That's buried in the earth.

'Experience has taught me well
The truth of what I say :
And to convince you I am right,
Just look around, I pray.

‘ You’ll read the wondrous mystery
In everything you see ;
’Twas from a buried nut arose
This spreading chestnut tree.

‘ Each ear in that ripe cornfield too,
That waves with pleasant sound,
Rose from a grain that faithful hands
Had hidden ’neath the ground.

‘ And all the bright and fragrant flowers,
That on all sides unfold,
Arose from something buried down
Beneath the dewy mould.

‘ I died myself—and rose again,
And know the tale is true ;
Shall I tell you my history ?’

CHAR. ‘ Yes, Butterfly, please do.’

BUT. ‘ Well, sit beneath the tree again ;
I’ll settle on your knee,
And tell you of the wondrous change
This year has brought to me.

'But do not touch my pretty wings,
You'll spoil them if you do ;
Your little hands are rather rough,
And very heavy too.'

'Don't be afraid, I'll promise not
To touch them,' Charley cried.
'Oh, thank you ; then I'll come at once,
And tell you how I died.'

So rising from the woodbine sweet,
Her wings she did unfold,
And flying on to Charley's knee,
'Twas thus her tale she told.

PART II.

'I was not born a butterfly,
To loiter on the wing ;
But just a crawling hairy worm,
An ugly little thing.

' I lived upon a cabbage green,
Between its leaves I curled,
Contented there I passed my life ;
I thought it was the world.'

CHAR. 'You thought a cabbage was the world !'
And Charley laughed with glee ;
'To take a cabbage for the world,
How foolish one must be.'

BUT. 'The cabbage *was* a world to me :
Upon it I was born,
Between its leaves I passed my life,
Day, evening, night, and dawn.

'My little eyes were far too weak
To see what lay outside :
I had not brain to comprehend
Your world so vast and wide.

'You need not laugh ; a day may come
When you perhaps will see
That many make a like mistake,
Far wiser than poor me.'

CHAR. 'I beg your pardon, Butterfly,
I fear I've caused you pain.
Please go on with your history ;
I will not laugh again.'



BUT. 'Indeed I should not take offence,
Nor be ashamed to tell
How very ignorant I was,
Because I know it well.

'And looking back upon those days,
I often laugh and wonder
At all my vain and foolish thoughts ;
Oh, how a worm can blunder !

‘ Because *I* could not see the world,
So plainly to be seen :
I felt convinced that nothing lived
Except my cabbage green.

‘ And wondrous wise I thought myself,
Poor simpleton was I !
Because I could not see, I cried,
There’s no such thing as sky.’

‘ How can the eyes and brain of worm
Behold and learn aright
The secrets of a higher state ?
It’s all beyond them quite.

‘ Yet many a vain and foolish worm
Declared and thought with me,
“ I won’t believe in anything
I cannot know and see.”

‘ And many a vain and foolish worm
Says just the same to-day,
For every vain and foolish worm
Will have its foolish way.

‘ And won’t admit the real fault
Is with their brain and eyes,
That both are far too small to grasp
The mysteries of the skies.

‘ Now, listen while I tell to you,
As it was told to me,
A wondrous fact no living man
Can understand or see.

‘ One morning I was eating up
My cabbage, when there flew,
Quite close to me, a butterfly,
With wings of gorgeous hue.

‘ She’d had a fright, or hurt herself,
For, as she touched the leaf,
I saw her tremble, pale, and swoon,
And crawled to her relief.

‘ I held her head and forced between
Her lips a drop of dew ;
She soon recovered, sighed and said :
“ The water’s brought me to.

' "'Twas palpitation of the heart ;
I'm better now, indeed.
Oh, thank you, Caterpillar kind ;
You've been a friend in need."

"Don't mention it," I quickly cried ;
"I'm well repaid, my dear,
To have a long-desired chance,
Of seeing you so near.



' "I've often watched you hovering by,
And marked your beauteous wings,
But never dared to speak to you—
Worms are such common things.

“ And you’re so very beautiful,
So graceful and so fine,
I must confess I’ve sometimes wished
Your form was also mine.

“ Though mostly I’m contented here,
To eat my leaves and crawl,
I *sometimes* feel annoyed to be
So ugly and so small.

“ Don’t think me envious, jealous, vain,
For that I would not be ;
Oh, I should be so happy if
You’d come and live near me.

“ I love to see your brilliant wings,
But seldom have you near ;
I hardly catch a glimpse of you,
When—flip!—you disappear.

“ Which cabbage do you live upon ?
I’ll come and live there too ;
That is if you do not object
To have me dwell by you.

“ I know there’s many a pretty thing
That you can teach to me ;
I’m fond of good society,
Though but a worm I be.’

“ You funny, little, curious thing,”
In merry tones she said,
“ And so you think that I could live
On this small cabbage-bed !

“ My dear, around you on all sides
Are forest trees and bowers,
And mountains, rivers, vale, and sky,
And beauteous plants and flowers.

“ You could not come and live with me,
Nor could I live with you :
You want the cabbage, I the sun,
And fragrant honey-dew.

“ You want the shade ; but I, the light,
The air, the fields, the flowers,
The mountains, meadows, gardens, vales,
The leafy forest bowers.

“ You seem surprised, no doubt ; you'll say,
Explain these things to me,
To try and make you understand,
A waste of time would be.

“ You have not got the brain to grasp
Such mighty thoughts as these ;
Your eye was formed for cabbages,
And cabbages it sees.

“ And nothing else you'll ever see,
However hard you strain ;
And nothing else you'll understand,
Until you get a brain.

“ But don't look so distressed and sad,
Poor worm, so small and weak ;
A day will come when of yourself
This knowledge you will seek.

“ You've been so kind I will disclose
A secret great and true ;
No doubt you won't believe it, still
It's truth I tell to you.

“ Pray look at me, admire me well,
Observe my head and face,
My legs so long, my little feet,
My colours and my grace.

“ Observe how well I move about,
How I can fly and spring ;
Compared with me, poor worm, you look
An awkward ugly thing.”

‘ Indignant tears rose in my eyes,
I cried in angry pain :
“ Though beautiful in feature, ma’am,
In speaking you’re too plain.

“ I like out-spoken truth myself,
And honesty in dealings ;
But when one meets an ugly worm,
One need not hurt its feelings.”

‘ She only smiled a laughing smile
And said, “ Come ; dry your eyes ;
For I have news to turn to joy
All vain regrets and sighs.

“ News that will take the sting away
From what *appears* hard fate ;
News that will make you satisfied
To crawl, and eat, and wait.

“ You think me fine—well, so I am,
With wings of glorious sheen ;
Now, listen—I was once like you,
A caterpillar green.

“ An awkward crawling, ugly worm,
Just born to sleep and eat,
Who never dreamed of anything
Beyond a cabbage sweet.”

“ You’re mad !” cried I, “ or else, poor dear,
You’re wandering in your head ;
I fear you’re feeling ill again ;
Go home and get to bed.”

“ I’m neither mad nor ill,” she said,
“ I tell you it is true ;
But I’ve not finished, listen—soon
You’ll be an insect too.

“ A lovely insect, just like me,
Flying about the world.”

“ You’re making fun of me,” I said,
And angrily I curled.

“ Ah, pout and twist just as you will,
Poor little worm,” she cried ;
“ You’ll learn the truth of what I’ve said,
But not until you’ve died.

“ You’ll die one day, and then you’ll rise
A lovely butterfly ;
Yes, you may shake your head, you’ll see.
Good-bye, kind worm, good-bye.”

“ Nonsense,” I thought, as she flew off
And left me sad and vexed ;
Was I to die ?—I’d never felt
So troubled and perplexed.

‘ To die ! and then lie cold and stiff,
Upon the ground to fall ;
And eat no more nice cabbages,
Nor on their cool leaves crawl.

“ Oh, horrible ! oh, terrible !”
I cried ; “ I would not die,
Though it were true that I should rise
A glorious butterfly.

“ But such a foolish, idle tale,
No worm with sense believes ;”
So thinking, once again I turned
To eat my cabbage-leaves.

‘ Well, time past on : what I had heard,
I very soon forgot ;
And thought no more of death and wings,
Nor any future lot.

‘ Until one day I felt a strange
Sensation o’er me creep ;
I could not eat my cabbage-leaves,
And felt inclined to sleep.

‘ I could not crawl, nor move about,
Nor turn, nor hardly see ;
“ Oh dear,” I cried, “ I’m very ill !
What can be wrong with me ?”

' Just then I heard a voice, I thought
I recognised, close by :
" Don't be afraid, poor worm," it said ;
" You're only going to die."

' With pain I turned me round and saw
My friend the Butterfly ;
" Oh, save me ! give me life !" I cried,
" I do not want to die !"

" " Not want to die," she gently said,
" And wake with glorious wings ?"
" Oh no," I answered, " for I don't
Believe in such vain things."

" " Poor, trembling, little, doubting one !"
I heard her softly say ;
Then all became confused and dark,
I'd fainted quite away.

' How long I lingered in that state,
If months or years rolled past,
I cannot tell ; all that I know,
Is that I woke at last.

'Awoke to yawn, and twist, and stretch,
To straighten legs and back ;
And wonder why it was so dark,
When, lo, I heard a crack !

'My body had split right in two,
I saw the opening slit ;
"Oh dear !" I cried, " I'm killed !" but no,
I was not hurt a bit.

'And then it seemed, I don't know how,
As if my outer skin
Had turned into a kind of house,
Where I was safe within.

'Well, it was cracked and broken now,
Of that there was no doubt ;
"Dear me," said I, "it's very odd,
I'll venture to creep out."

'But who can tell the joy I felt,
My rapturous, mad delight,
To find myself possessed of wings,
Of colours rich and bright.

‘ No longer now a slighted worm,
Condemned to slowly creep ;
Yes ! I had changed to butterfly,
While I had been asleep.

‘ Trembling with joy, with hope, and life,
Almost as one in dreams,
I spread my lovely wings and flew
Beneath the sun’s warm beams.



‘ Who can explain the mystery,
The joys of second birth ?
Who can aright thy charms describe,
Oh wondrous, smiling earth ?

‘ In roaming o’er the streams and brooks,
In kissing fragrant flowers,
In sporting in the sunbeams bright,
I spend my happy hours.

‘ Oh blessed, glorious, wondrous change !
From worm to butterfly !
Don’t marvel that I say to you,
’Tis blissful joy to die.

‘ For listen here—I heard it said,
In one of my high flights,
That mortals, when they leave this world,
Are changed to angels bright.

‘ I heard a whisper of a land,
Far lovelier still than this,
Where angels live eternally
A life of perfect bliss.

‘ What is an angel ? doubtless you
Know better far than I ;
But there is one thing you can learn
From me, the Butterfly.

‘ If man’s change to bright angel is
As great as mine from worm,
Why fret when death draws nigh to cut
The thread of life’s short term ;

‘ Or wish that those who are transformed
To that pure, glorious state,
Were back like crawling worms again,
To wonder, doubt, and wait?

‘ Don’t say that you believe the change
Impossible to be ;
If ever you’re inclined to doubt,
Oh, pray, just think of me.

‘ Is it more strange that man should pass
In angel form to skies,
Than that a bright-winged butterfly
From crawling worm should rise.

‘ And if the land where angels dwell
Is to this one as fair
As I find this to cabbage-leaves,
Wish no one back from there.’

* * * * *

‘ Charley ! Charley ! wake, my boy !
We’ve searched the house for you ;
Come, get up, darling ! never lie
Or sleep in evening dew.’

The child, aroused, woke up to find
His father standing by :

‘ What, is it you, papa !’ he cried ;
‘ Why—where’s the Butterfly ?’

‘ What butterfly, my little son ?’
Papa asked in surprise,
As Charley gazed in wonder round,
And rubbed his little eyes.

‘ Oh dear ! I see, I’ve been asleep,
And had a dream,’ he said.

‘ Papa ! mamma’s an angel bright,
Although she’s really dead.

‘ She is not in that big long box
They buried in the ground !
She’s happy in another world,
With wings to fly around.’

And seated on his father's knee,
He told him, word for word,
What from the golden Butterfly
He, in his dream, had heard.

And then he asked, with puzzled frown,
' But is it really true ?
Do butterflies all spring from worms ?
I *can't* think so, can you ?

' A butterfly's not like a worm ;
In fact, they're different quite :
The one's a very pretty thing,
The other's just a fright.

' The one has colours rich and rare,
And wings to fly about ;
Now, how can that grow from a worm ?
I cannot make it out.

' Is there a way for us to find
If such a thing is done ?
I wish that butterflies *could* talk,
I'd go and speak to one.

'For if it's true that *that* can be,

Why then, without a doubt,

● Mamma may be an angel, too :

How can we find it out ?'

'We'll see to-morrow, Charley dear,'

Papa, with kisses, said ;

'It's eight o'clock, and here is nurse

To take you in to bed.'

Next morning, by papa's desire,

The gardener did bring

A hairy caterpillar green,

An ugly little thing.

He'd found it on the cabbages,

And Charley said, with glee,

'Now, if it turns to butterfly,

We shall be there to see.'

Nurse placed it in a cardboard box,

And made a lid of net,

So that the crawling prisoner might

Fresh air in plenty get.

And Charley gave it every day
A cabbage-leaf for meat,
Until there came a morning when
It quite refused to eat.

It lost its colour, and it seemed
All shrivelled up and dry,
'Oh dear!' cried Charley, 'I'm afraid
It's ill and going to die.'

But what was his surprise next day
To find, the box within,
A strange brown object : by its side
Remained an empty skin.

'It is the skin of my poor worm !'
He cried ; 'oh, what's amiss ?'
It's all quite right,' papa replied :
' See, here's the chrysalis.

' The worm is in this chrysalis,
So strangely marked and made ;
We'll place it where you'll see it well,
Beneath this large glass shade.'

There Charley saw his chrysalis,
When he awoke each day ;
And so the pleasant autumn months
And winter passed away.

One bright spring morning, looking there,
He gave a joyful cry ;
For, climbing up the glass, he saw
A golden butterfly.

And down below upon the stand
Remained an empty shell ;
And Charley ran to find papa,
The pleasant news to tell.

And after all the house had seen
The wondrous pretty thing,
It was agreed to let him go,
And see him on the wing.

As Charley lingered watching him
Amid the blossoms hide,
His little face grew full of thought,
Then joyfully he cried :

'Papa, it's very wonderful ;
The Butterfly was right :
Although we die and turn to dust,
We *shall* be angels bright.'

THE END.



